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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SP](#) [RS](#)  
SUBJECT: ZAPATERO MEETS MEDVEDEV

REF: MOSCOW 2993

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Alice G. Wells for reasons  
1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) In his October 1 visit to Konstantinovsky Palace outside of St. Petersburg, Prime Minister Jose Luis Zapatero met Medvedev for the first time in what Spanish diplomats here report was a session short on substance. While no agreements were signed and the talks covering economic, cultural, and scientific cooperation were conducted in broad strokes, Spanish diplomats emphasized the symbolism of the visit, with Spain seeking to expand bilateral trade and "radically reinforce" Medvedev's diplomatic credentials. Spanish diplomats drew attention to Zapatero's and Medvedev's common backgrounds as constitutional law professors as a personal connection that aided the leaders' good personal chemistry. In covering the event, the Russian media focused more attention on Zapatero's remarks regarding Real Madrid's defeat of Zenit and translation difficulties during the meetings than it did the limited substance of the visit.

¶2. (C) Spanish diplomats underscored to us that in public and private, Zapatero called on Russia to fully satisfy the commitments made in the Medvedev-Sarkozy Six-Point Plan and the September 8 agreement. Having said that, our Spanish colleagues confided that it was important to build cooperation with Russia, "despite the crisis in Georgia." The two leaders also discussed Russia's proposed European security treaty, which Spanish diplomats called "incipient" and a conversation with few details. The Spanish delegation also received a copy of the Russian non-paper prepared for Angela Merkel's visit the following day, October 2 (reftel).

¶3. (C) On November 17, Russia and Spain will hold their Economic Cooperation Committee meeting in Madrid with working groups on energy, infrastructure, climate change, industry, and tourism. How Spanish businesses can participate in projects in Sochi will be one of the topics likely discussed. King of Spain Juan Carlos I has invited Medvedev to visit Spain early next year, and Medvedev reportedly accepted.  
RUBIN